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A WOMAN'S PLACE IS ON THE SALES FORCE

Page 34.

Sales and marketing's top golfers

Special Section on incentives: Going for the top

Long distance phone marketers refuse to hang it up

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SALES STRATEGY

Nynex tries out low cost selling

In a bid to sell key telephone systems profitably to small offices (up to 16 telephone lines), Nynex Business Information Systems, White Plains, NY, created a new selling arm, Compact Systems Div., that will rely on leads generated by an outside organization. Edward Tierney, general manager of the new division, figures there are some 300,000 prospects in the 7-state area Nynex serves (New York plus New England except for parts of Connecticut), but admits that having a saleperson call on doctors, lawyers, and such would not be profitable.

He's made an arrangement whereby Telephone Marketing Resources, New York City, will develop sales leads for Compact, following a scenario created by Nynex and using commercial mailing lists and the yellow pages as sources for names. Leads that meet certain parameters will be sent to Compact's two sales offices in New York City and Waltham, MA. Compact's sales reps will then try to sell telephone systems over the phone, calling on prospects only if that's necessary to close the sale.

Tierney is starting out with 20 sales reps, a size that he says "is based on the share we hope to capture of what is a $135 million market in our area." One-third of the reps are account executives who worked for New York Tel and New England Tel. The remaining two-thirds were hired from the outside, mostly from interconnect companies.

While all salespeople are on quota, the ex-Bell people are paid straight salary while the newcomers' compensation is 60% base pay, 40% commission. By June, however, all reps will have compensation tied to quota, Tierney says.

Nynex's Ed Tierney targets small businesses with a low-cost sell.

Those hired from the outside were put through a two-week sales training program "to give them a basic understanding of how a network works," Tierney says. Other points covered in the course: features of the Northern Telecom Vantage telephones they'll sell, office applications, and ways of presenting costs to customers.

Why Northern Telecom instead of AT&T? "At the time we made our pick," Tierney says, "AT&T's comparative system didn't have the range of lines we were looking for." Ma Bell's offspring are going their own way.

S&MM SALESGRAPH

Two-earner couples: It helps to be white

Marketers' favorite sales target, the married couple with both spouses working, boosted their median weekly earnings 6.6% to $666 in last year's fourth quarter vs. the comparative year-ago period. However, a Bureau of Labor Statistics report reveals that the overall improvement masked sharp differences along racial and ethnic lines.

White families where husband and wife worked enjoyed a 6.8% gain in earnings, but their black counterparts eked out a much smaller 1.7% increment, and Hispanics received only a 1.1% increase. Among all families, however, Hispanics led the way with a 10.2% surge in earnings; followed by whites, 6.4% and blacks, 4.1%.

Median weekly earnings, 1984 IVQ vs. 1983 IVQ

	Whites		Blacks		Hispanics	
	1984	% Gain	1984	% Gain	1984	% Gain
All families[1]	$532	6.4%	$381	4.1%	$400	10.2%
Married-couple families	575	8.5	480	3.2	440	10.0
Husband and wife work	674	6.8	589	1.7	545	1.1

[1]Families with wage and salary workers; self-employed excluded.
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Earnings of Workers and Their Families: Fourth Quarter 1984*, USDL 8[illegible]-43.
*Sales & Marketing Management.

DISTRIBUTION

Lap-toppers in a stew over sales channels

Marketers of lap-top portable computers are scattering their bets on what they hope will be the best

A woman's place is on the sales force

Saleswomen say they listen to customers better, pamper them, and close accounts salesmen ignore. So why are they still in the minority?

By RAYNA SKOLNIK
Senior Editor

When Linda Crocker began selling computers several years ago, the prospects she called on "didn't expect to hear anything technical coming out of the mouth of a woman," she says. One customer, a civil engineer, treated her "like a bit of fluff," asking her basic questions in a way that indicated that "he just didn't expect me to know the answers." He wasn't being disrespectful or rude, Crocker says. He simply didn't think it was possible that she knew what she was doing.

Crocker, 39, who has been selling data communications networks for the last two years and is currently with Uninet, New York City, says she has seen that kind of attitude change. "Women are in more technical areas today," she says. "It's not as rare to encounter us."

More and more women like Crocker are moving into sales jobs that were once the exclusive province of men. Cindy Fleming, for example, travels to all the port cities of the U.S. to sell G. Heileman Brewing's beers to the suppliers of foreign ships calling at the ports. And Nancy Kenney spent three years with Honeywell and one with United Technologies selling energy-management systems—computers that regulate heating and cooling systems—for buildings ranging in size from 300,000 sq. ft. to 1 million sq. ft. (Kenney resigned in February because she has a two and one-half-year-old son and wants to rethink her priorities in terms of job and family.)

Brown & Bigelow, a manufacturer of advertising specialty items, had almost no saleswomen until about seven years ago. Today, 25% of its salespeople are women. Johnson & Johnson, a diversified marketer of medical and pharmaceutical supplies and consumer products, had a field sales force that was 31% female in 1984, up from 17.6% in 1978. But women are still unquestionably a minority in the sales profession. Census Bureau figures show 68,694 saleswomen in manufacturing companies, out of a total of 433,496 salespeople, in 1980, the latest year for which figures are available. And women are a still smaller minority in certain industries (see box, page 35).

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) offers more current statistics in its monthly *Employment and Earnings* studies. BLS reports that in October 1982 there were 248,000 women aged 20 and over selling commodities other than retail products, a 20% increase from the 207,000 in October 1982. In the same period, the number of commodities salesmen aged 20 and over increased only 3%, to 1,232,000 from 1,199,000. (BLS figures for both men and women are much higher than those from the Census Bureau partly because BLS includes people missed by the Census Bureau's samples.) The number of saleswomen is growing as they continue to prove that they can mas-

Cindy Fleming sells Heileman beers to suppliers of foreign ships.

ter the intricacies of any product line, and can sell and service accounts as well as their male counterparts, if not better. Many of the women interviewed for this article are top-ranked in their companies.

Whether or not they are at the top of the pay scale is another question. Their annual earnings range from $25,000 to $70,000, but the women's opinions of their status varies. "This is not the new age," Fleming says. "Women are getting into the work force by leaps and bounds, but our salaries are still below average." Another woman remarked, "I don't think I get paid less than the men here." Then, fearing she might be either ill-informed or naive, asked that the comment not be attributed.

As the number of saleswomen increases, the curiosity factor diminishes. Rarely does a saleswoman still find that she can get in to see a prospect just because he wonders what a saleswoman looks like, or because he thinks a bit of feminine pulchritude will brighten an otherwise dull day. Saleswomen are thus likely to experience rejection as often as salesmen, if you want to call this kind of equality "progress."

There are still situations, however, in which women *are* treated differently—negatively. And there are times when they have to contend with problems that salesmen simply don't encounter.

"Credibility is still a problem," says Dr. Barbara Pletcher, founder and executive director of the National Assn. for Professional Saleswomen (NAPS), Sacramento, CA. A saleswoman's expertise is likely to be questioned, even challenged, by men who wonder what a woman could possibly know about their business. Thus women may have to sell themselves as well as their products, and they have devised a number of tactics for doing so.

Fleming, who is based at Heileman headquaters in Milwaukee and is a co-founder of the company's International Div., in no way fits the mold of salespeople in her industry. She is, she says, the only woman in a beer company in this country who travels to the ports. Moreover, her appearance always surprises prospects. Her low voice leads them to expect someone middle-aged; she's 30. Because she sells beer, people assume that she drinks a lot of it and is shaped accordingly. They don't expect someone who weighs 120 lbs. As a result, she says, "One or two of my customers tested me, to find out what I know. But I know my business as well as my competitors do. When people find out you can handle your business, they don't care if you're male or female."

When Fleming made her first call on one customer in a West Coast port, the former salesman for the territory accompanied her to introduce her. Even though the salesman made it clear that Fleming was taking over the account, the customer directed most of his questions to the outgoing salesman. Fleming acknowledges that the customer's Oriental heritage may have been a factor, and that he may simply have been more comfortable talking to a man. "I made delicate inroads and statements to establish my ground," Fleming says. "I had to explain that I was fully knowledgeable and that I travel to all the ports in the U.S., whereas the salesman had called on only this one port." Thus her experience was much broader.

There aren't many women selling energy-management systems, Nancy Kenney says, because the field developed out of the construction

How many saleswomen are there?

The 1980 Census of Population reports 68,694 women in commodities sales other than retail sales out of a total of 433,496 salespeople. Women therefore represent slightly less than 16% of the total.

Manufacturing Industry	Total	Female
Total Manufacturing	433,496	68,694
Nondurable goods	**183,629**	**34,900**
Food & beverage	46,429	9,272
Textile mill products	12,548	2,657
Apparel	25,456	8,625
Paper & allied products	18,994	2,820
Printing & publishing	343	101
Chemicals & allied products	56,972	7,462
Rubber & misc plastics	11,268	1,670
Other nondu[illegible]ples	11,619	2,293
Durable goods	**237,066**	**31,907**
Lumber & wood except furniture	8,821	1,156
Furniture	12,459	1,925
Stone, clay, glass, & concrete	14,735	2,072
Primary iron & steel	10,403	1,057
Primary nonferrous	5,521	885
Fabricated metal	28,312	3,470
Nonelectrical machinery	61,750	6,322
Electrical machinery, equip. & supplies	35,690	5,431
Motor vehicles	9,913	736
Aircraft, space vehicles	3,612	403
Other trans. equip.	2,921	406
Other durables	54,730	9,931

Note: Nondurable plus durable subtotals do not equal grand totals because the Census Bureau did not include figures for a category 4 calls Nonspecified Manufacturing Industries.
Source: Census Bureau, *1980 Census of Population: Occupation by Industry, PC80-2-7C.*
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industry, which "is dominated by men, is very hard-nosed—a lot of rough language. I imagine men would think women couldn't handle that."

The 37-year-old Kenney can probably handle almost anything. She was an FBI agent for five years before switching to sales. When she found that "people in construction couldn't deal with a woman," she considered it their problem, not hers. The situation, she says, "put me at an advantage because they felt awkward and I didn't. I was comfortable with men." In fact, "it was humorous," she says. "They'd stop when they were about to use certain words, and I'd say, 'I've heard those words before. I've even used them.' " That approach, she says, gave her "more authority."

Saleswomen may find that they have to prove themselves not only to prospects but to their male peers. Lois Hoopes, director of marketing for the Waverly Hotel in Atlanta, is the only woman among 23 marketing directors for Stouffer Hotels, Solon, OH. She had previously been the Waverly's director of sales. Also, she's 54, and other marketing directors range in age from early 30s to early 40s. "If I don't have a chance to sit with people one-on-one," she says, "I get the feeling they don't take me seriously. They wonder what I'm doing [at a marketing conference]." Hoopes's solution is to seek people out and get into conversations about mutual concerns. "Once I get into this kind of exchange and they can see that I can offer something," she says, "the confidence level begins to rise."

One of the guys

On the other hand, Janet Maus (pronounced *moss*), a corporate account executive selling advertising specialty products and programs for Brown & Bigelow, St. Paul, senses no difficulty in relating to male peers. Part of the reason, says Maus, 42, is that Brown & Bigelow's commissioned salespeople "all work alone, it's very professional, and there's no time for backbiting."

Maus's own background could also be a factor. She has three brothers, and says her father (who has worked for Brown & Bigelow for 46 years) "treated me like one of the guys." Also, she says, "I worked in a man's world all my life." A Washington, DC, resident, she worked on Capitol Hill before joining Brown & Bigelow about six years. Her positions included speech writer and press secretary to a Congressman. "I always said 'Me and the other men,' " she says. "Then I had children and realized I was a female."

There's also the question of women dealing with male subordinates. Hoopes has a male director of sales reporting to her, but says that neither of them finds the situation awkward or difficult. "It's not so much a matter of his reporting to me as 'This is what we have to do.' "

Some saleswomen find that resentment comes more often from older men. Eileen Hancox is the only female territory manager selling Whirlpool appliances for Raymond Rosen Co., a Philadelphia distributor. There are seven men. Some of the older men do remark that "this business is going to hell since they let women in," says Hancox, 45, but she takes the remark as a joke. Most of the time, she says, there is a real spirit of cooperation: "If I need something, another salesman will get it from his territory for me."

Despite the various obstacles they encounter, saleswomen today are confident and self-assured and are quick to point out ways in

Four women who have found their places on the sales and marketing team (clockwise from top left): Federal Express's Reader, the Waverly Hotel's Hoopes, Brown & Bigelow's Maus, and Raymond Rosen Co.'s Hancox.

which they excel. "The biggest key is follow-up," says Diane Reader, who was a Pittsburgh-based senior sales representative for Ricoh, Fairfield, NJ, when first interviewed for this article. She has since taken a sales position at Federal Express that pays $8,000 more and, she says, offers her a better chance at a management spot. At Ricoh, she says, "I replaced a male sales rep, and he never contacted most of the accounts after the sale was made."

Loyal customers

Reader, 27, says that women also tend to "pamper" customers, doing the little things that a man might ignore, with the result that customers respect saleswomen and are "more loyal" to them. Such was the case with one of her Ricoh accounts, Elliott Corp. Her customer had been using a Ricoh system and wanted to expand it to all Elliott branches, which at that time had a variety of types of equipment. The problem was, he didn't know who had what. "I asked how I could help," Reader says. "He gave me a list of all the locations and asked me to find out what they had." Reader says she actually did call about half of the locations, and the customer was very pleased when she reported her findings. It was the kind of effort that "didn't show immediate profit," Reader says, but was important to building rapport.

Marie T. Rossi, founder and chairwoman of the Women in Sales Assn., Valhalla, NY, says that "women have more sensitivity to the selling situation." Sales managers tell her, she says, that "women listen, and that they can be more service oriented."

Women listen well, but they also speak well. Dr. Stuart Feinberg, executive vice president of BFS Psychological Associates, New York City, says that test scores have shown that women have better vocabularies and can express themselves better than men.

These articulate, sensitive, and hardworking saleswomen are setting some impressive records. In the fiscal year ended Mar. 31, 1984, Reader sold 184% of quota, an achievement that earned her a place among the top five salespeople at Ricoh plus a trip to Japan, where the parent company is based. Also, she was given national account responsibility after she successfully closed several such accounts locally. One of them was Westinghouse, which "hadn't heard from Ricoh in years," she says. "The male rep had let that potentially large customer go."

Women's advancement is inhibited by their unwillingness to travel extensively.

United Technologies, Hartford, CT, hired Kenney, she says, because "I had an outstanding record. At Honeywell, I sold the largest contract in the history of the division."

It appears, though, that women's advancement in the sales profession is being inhibited, despite their competence, by their unwillingness to travel extensively. For example, there are no women presently on the sales force for Simplicity Manufacturing, a marketer of snowthrowers, lawn mowers, and lawn and garden tractors. That's hardly a traditional product line for women to sell, yet Warner Frazier, president of the Port Washington, WI, company, says he would gladly hire saleswomen. The two who worked for him a few years ago were "super" and he got "good vibes" from the dealers they called on. One woman even won the company's annual service award after she drove through a weekend snowstorm that even trucks couldn't penetrate to deliver parts that a dealer needed for a show. But few women apply to his company, Frazier says, because the job requires so much travel.

Women themselves mention travel and family ties as obstacles. Fleming, for example, does not do any of the international travel that the director of her division does because those trips last three to six weeks and she doesn't want to be away from her husband and two daughters. As mentioned above, Kenney resigned from United Technologies for family reasons. She did, however, continue to work during her pregnancy and returned after a six-month maternity leave.

A different view of management opportunities is given by Maus. "I had management experience on Capitol Hill," she says. "I had a staff: I've had all that." Now, she says, she prefers to be a doer and a producer, rather than a manager. Her superiors are aware of her feeling and have therefore not offered her a management job, she says.

By and large, women seem to feel that obstacles to advancement are often the ones that they themselves set up. Many women believe that just as entry-level sales jobs are opening up to them, management positions will too, as women gain the requisite experience. In fact, says Crocker, "A managerial spot was one carrot held out to me when I took this job."

Different outlook

Generalizations are dangerous, of course. Not every saleswoman has a success story to tell. Feinberg points out that "promotion is still more difficult than actual job entry" for saleswomen.

But changes are undeniably occurring, and progress is undeniably being made. A spokesman for Johnson & Johnson, explaining the increase in the number of field saleswomen at that company, says, "Women have a different outlook today. They have more career commitment and make themselves eligible for sales jobs." Another reason for the increase in saleswomen is the simple need for talented employees. The computer industry in particular, Pletcher says, "needs people as fast as they can produce them. Companies can't refuse people who can do the job."

A murky light on hiring, training costs

The skimpy data on sales training costs—the only annually published figures appear in *S&MM's Survey of Selling Costs*—were augmented recently by McGraw-Hill's Laboratory of Advertising Performance (LAP). For the first time, LAP added a second question to its biennial survey of sales call costs, asking, "What is the approximate cost of recruiting, selecting, training, and supervising one of your salespeople until productive?"
Estimates by respondents ranged all the way from a high of $56,111 in miscellaneous services to a low of $23,000 in oil and gas extraction. As expected, because they include hiring and because the term "until productive" can have many interpretations, LAP's figures (see table) are generally much higher than those of S&MM. The 1984 *Survey of Selling Costs* pegged the average sales training cost per salesperson at $24,600 for industrial products, $16,600 for consumer products, and $16,000 for services. LAP's overall average: $41,990.

Average cost of recruiting, selecting, training, and supervising

Industry	*Cost*
Manufacturing	
Petroleum & coal	$43,167
Nonelectrical machinery	$46,392
Instruments & related products	$45,183
Chemicals	$44,861
Primary metals	$43,649
Rubber & miscellaneous plastics	$43,500
Fabricated metals	$43,000
Paper	$42,500
Electrical & electronic equip.	$40,619
Transportation equip.	$39,405
Miscellaneous	$38,200
Stone, clay, & glass	$36,471
Furniture	$35,455
Food	$29,167
Oil & gas extraction	$23,000
Nonmanufacturing	
Miscellaneous services	$56,111
Insurance	$53,000
Business services	$35,625
Banking	$32,143
Air transportation	$31,591
Wholesale trade—durables	$20,714

Source: McGraw-Hill's Laboratory of Advertising Performance, *Average Cost of Recruiting, Selecting, Training, and Supervising a Salesperson until Productive*, Report No. 8053.
*Sales & Marketing Management.

Unfortunately, some of LAP's results raise more questions than answers. For one thing, the two highest costs are reported for service industries—miscellaneous services, as cited above, and insurance, $53,000. As a rule, selling costs surveys, by S&MM and Dartnell, for example, put those of services below those of goods-producing industries. For another thing, in the manufacturing sector, the highest costs—in petroleum and coal products—and lowest costs—oil and gas extraction—occur in two very closely related industries.

A LAP spokesman could not provide an explanation for the apparent contradictions. "We leave it up to the respondent," he said, "to decide what he includes as costs and what he means by productive. One respondent may include branch office overhead, for example, while another may not."

What Russia needs is the three-vodka lunch

The much-maligned business lunch is a Western invention that Russia should copy, according to Stanford Univ. professor Alexander Dallin, considered a leading expert on the Soviet Union. "The Soviets have never discovered the usefulness of the business lunch in cutting through layers of a cumbersome bureaucracy," he contends. "In the USSR a [business] problem has to make its way all the way up one line of an arthritic bureaucracy [to the Kremlin] and then, once a decision has been made or if further information is needed, it may have to go all the way down another line. A factory manager cannot telephone somebody on the other side of the bureaucracy or the industrial pyramid and arrange a business lunch to sort out the problems quickly." As a result, Dallin sees the USSR falling further behind the West when it comes to "streamlining the country into the electronic age."